



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Former U.S. Department of Homeland Security Specialist Sentenced for Conflict of Interest**

WASHINGTON - William J. Thorpe, a former Physical Security Specialist at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), was sentenced today to 12 months of supervised probation and ordered to perform 50 hours of community service after earlier pleading guilty to a misdemeanor conflict of interest charge, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Thorpe, 40, of Fredericksburg, Virginia, pled guilty in May 2011 in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. He was sentenced by the Honorable Magistrate Judge Alan Kay. As part of the guilty plea, Thorpe resigned his job with the Department of Homeland Security and agreed never again to work for the federal government.

During his plea, Thorpe admitted that his duties and responsibilities at DHS included preparing, formulating, developing and implementing DHS intelligence facility security policies, standards and procedures. He also provided direction for the development and implementation of DHS physical security requirements in accordance with the Director of Central Intelligence directives. Further, he provided input and support to related security functions.

The charge stemmed from a conflict between Thorpe's work at DHS and his work for an outside company. In addition to being a Physical Security Specialist at DHS, during the period of October 2008 through at least December 2009, he also was a paid employee, and held the title of "Senior Systems Engineer" at Total Security Products Corporation (TSP), a for-profit company headquartered in Richmond, Virginia. TSP was registered with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as a Minority Business Enterprise/Small Disadvantaged Business.

TSP was a full-service security and safety solution provider, which employed a network of safety and security consultants and manufacturers of security and safety products. Among other clients, TSP had contracts with the FBI, Department of State, United States Coast Guard, United States Border Patrol, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, and DHS.

At TSP, Thorpe's duties and responsibilities included designing and installing security systems. On occasion, he also would contact manufacturers for equipment that could be purchased by TSP.

FedBid, Inc. was an entity that provided online procurement services for the public sector, including DHS, to acquire commodities, products and services. During the relevant time, Thorpe had access to TSP's log-in and password, which enabled him to submit bids in FedBid ® On-Line Marketplace on behalf of TSP.

During the period of October 2008 through June 2009, Thorpe's supervisors at DHS requested that he assist in the creation of an Independent Government Cost Estimate for the procurement of a "box sale" of security parts for DHS. The target price set by DHS on this contract was \$98,130.34.

On or about July 17, 2009, Thorpe, utilizing the sensitive information that he learned as an employee of DHS, submitted a bid on FedBid, on behalf of TSP (with TSP management's knowledge and permission), in the amount of \$98,129.13 – only \$1.21 off of DHS's target price. The next lowest bid submitted for the contract was \$102,467.78.

Upon learning the full extent of Thorpe's involvement with TSP, DHS decided against awarding the contract to the company and gave it to the next lowest bidder.

When Thorpe was confronted by law enforcement, he admitted that he knew that he had a financial interest in TSP at the time he submitted the bid to DHS.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the outstanding efforts of the Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General and Office of Security, Counterintelligence and Investigations Division.

He also commended the efforts of those who worked on the case from the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Paralegal Specialists Diane Hayes and Legal Assistant Krishawn Graham. Finally, he praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorney Lionel André, who investigated the case and negotiated the plea.